

Message Text

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22

ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15

CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 DODE-00 ACDA-05 IGA-02 AID-05

OMB-01 TRSE-00 L-03 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00 /078 W

----- 023976

O R 030905Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY CAPE TOWN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4922

INFO AMEMBASSY ACCRA

AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY BLANTYRE

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY GABORONE

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LOURENCO MARQUES BY POUCH

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

USMISSION USUN

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAPE TOWN 0098

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SF, AO, MILI, PFOR

SUBJ: REGIONAL ARMS RESTRAINT STUDY

REF: STATE 20621

1. AS A RESULT OF THE ANGOLA EXPERIENCE SOUTH AFFICA WILL
INCREASE ITS EXPENDITURES FOR ARMS SUBSTANTIALLY IN THE COMING
MONTHS. WHILE A GOOD PART OF REQUIREMENTS CAN BE MET BY IN-COUNTRY
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MANUFACTURE, THE SAG WILL UNDOUBTEDLY TURN TO ITS TRADITIONAL

EUROPEAN SUPPLIERS WHO WE EXPECT WILL CONTINUE TO FIND MEANS TO
FILL WHATEVER ORDERS SAG MAY WISH TO PLACE.

2. EXPERIENCE IN ANGOLA FIGHTING HAS PROVIDED BASIS FOR
IDENTIFYING AND EVALUATING SHORTCOMINGS IN SAG DEFENSE
FORCES. DESPITE STRAIN ON ECONOMY, SAG WILL PROBABLY
INCREASE PERCENTAGE OF PERMANENT FORCE MANPOWER TO CITIZEN
FORCE UNITS CALLED UP FOR TEMPORARY SERVICE, AND PROVIDE
FOR ADDITIONAL TRAINING.

3. SOUTH AFRICA IS ACUTELY AWARE OF US POSITION ON ARMS
SUPPLY. NEVERTHELESS IN MOVING INTO ANGOLA AND FIGHTING WHAT
IT REGARDED AS THE WEST'S BATTLE, THE SAG EXPECTED UNDERSTANDING
AND SUPPORT. WHEN THIS DID NOT MATERIALIZE AND THE SAG REALIZED
AS PM VORSTER PUT IT THAT SA STOOD ALONE, EVEN THE OPPOSITION
CALLED FOR PROVIDING DEFENSE FORCES WITH WHATEVER THEY REQUIRE
TO DEFEND SOUTH AFRICA PROPER. IN THIS ATMOSPHERE WE SEE NO
REALISTIC POSSIBILITY OF DISSUADING SAG FROM MAKING INCREASED
ARMS EXPENDITURES.

4. INTERNAL PRESSURE LEADING TO INCREASED ARMS EXPENDITURES
HERE FLOWS FROM THE BURGEONING SOVIET AND CUBAN PRESENCE IN
ANGOLA, AND SOUTH AFRICA'S EXPECTATION THAT A HOSTILE ANGOLA
WILL SUPPORT GUERRILLA TYPE INCURSIONS BY SWAPO INTO SOUTH
WEST AFRICA. A REDUCTION IN THESE PERCEIVED THREATS IS PRE-
REQUISITE TO A CHANGE IN SAG ATTITUDES.

5. SAG STRENGTHENING OF DEFENSE ESTABLISHMENT AND NEW
LEGISLATION ON TERMS OF SERVICE PROVIDING SAG WITH GREATER
FLEXIBILITY IN EMPLOYMENT OF FORCES MAY HEIGHTEN
TRADITIONAL SUSPICIONS AND FEARS OF NEIGHBORING BLACK
STATES. WE THUS SEE SOME RISK IN A US CALL FOR ARMS
RESTRAINING ON PART OF THOSE IN AREA WHOM WE MAY BE ABLE
TO INFLUENCE, SINCE IT COULD BE INTERPRETED AS IN SOME
WAY SUPPORTING OR FAVORING SOUTH AFRICA.

6. SINCE FOREGOING DRAFTED, MAJOR GENERAL NEIL WEBSTER,
DG OF RESOURCES OF DEFENSE FORCES, TOLD INTERVIEWERS
EVENING FEBRUARY 2 THAT SAG EXPECTED ESCALATION OF BORDER
SITUATION TO BECOME "WAR OF MID-INTENSITY" MORE SERIOUS
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THAN GUERRILLA WARFARE BUT STILL SHORT OF FULL CONVENTIONAL
WAR. WEBSTER SAID THAT EXPERIENCE GAINED IN ANGOLA
FIGHTING HAD BEEN INVALUABLE TO THE LOGISTICAL, MEDICAL
AND OPERATIONAL BRANCHES OF THE SERVICES. "SOUTH AFRICANS,
LIKE THE ISRAELIS, MUST GET USED TO THE IDEA OF LIVING WITH
A WARLIKE SITUATION FOR SOME YEARS TO COME."
BOWDLER

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NNN

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